



January 12, 2015

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Spotlight on Success – Tri Lite

Tri Lite is a Chicago-based small business designer and manufacturer of energy-efficient LED lighting systems for warehouse docks. Tri Lite participated in the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Office of Trade and Investment mission to a German trade show in June 2014. The Illinois Small Business Development Center International Trade Center (ITC) at Industrial Council of Nearwest Chicago (ICNC) helped Tri Lite prepare for the trade mission, providing crucial advice and information to help the firm in make the most of this opportunity.

ITC Director Laura Flamm met with the Tri Lite team in April 2014 to discuss general sales strategy for Europe, their approach for the trade show and marketing materials. Tri Lite lacked substantial information on their competition in the German market and needed a list of customer prospects. Tri Lite's Sarah Fiola thanked Laura, "I will definitely be reaching out to the target customers you suggested. We really appreciate the work that went into putting this together."

The ITC followed up with market research on the German dock lighting industry, including an overview of Tri Lite's main competitors, information on potential customers attending the show and strategic recommendations. The project entailed phone interviews with both German lighting experts and dock technology companies. Tri Lite met with several sales prospects identified by the ICNC ITC and has increased sales to Europe. The ITC also assisted with follow-up from the show by vetting Tri Lite's quotes for CE testing helping the company save several thousand dollars in testing costs.

Maximizing Neoserra – Inactivating Advisors

SBDC Directors: To help simplify Neoserra records please use the directions below to review all advisors listed at your center and mark those that no longer advise clients as "inactive." Thank you.

View

Advisors

Filter (Right corner) –

New

Click down arrow in dropdown & choose “Center”

Click in open box to right: Select your center name

Apply

See Advisor List

Check Status; Active or Inactive to see if correct

If Wrong: Edit – Right of advisor name

Inactivate advisor if appropriate

Valued Resources – Social Media Checklist

Relaying an appropriate and effective message to clients and customers through social media platforms can be difficult. Leveraging social media networks to maximize business opportunities is incredibly important in today’s world. The Whole Brain Group has developed a checklist for social media users to provide a convenient and coherent way to utilize websites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, Pinterest, YouTube and Slideshare in a way that will benefit businesses. For the article and the printable material see:

http://www.mediabistro.com/alltwitter/social-business-checklist_b62608

Network News and Moves

Cyber-security for Small Businesses - The recent holiday (e-commerce) season and alleged foreign cyber-attack on a U.S. corporation have brought warranted attention to small business concerns and needs on similar topics. Thus we would like to share the following resources with you – please feel free to share with your networks and clients. .

1. The SBA Learning Center offers a free course on cyber-security:
<https://www.sba.gov/tools/sba-learning-center/training/cybersecurity-small-businesses>
2. NIST draft cybersecurity for small business (open for public comment until February 9) --- please distribute through your network to maximize review/comment. The piece includes a comment from our DC Emerging Leaders graduated firm *e-Management*. (quick link to the draft for public review: <http://csrc.nist.gov/publications/PubsDrafts.html#ir7621r1>)

Let us know if you have any questions or suggestions that we can forward to the SBA/Office of Entrepreneurial Education (OEE). SBA/OEE is in dialogue with some alliance partners about opportunities to enhance outreach/education strategies on this critical topic. SBA/OEE has stated that many grantee partners also offer excellent trainings and that they will be compiling those references and finding ways to widen attention/usage.

America’s SBDC Network Connection

Please [CLICK HERE](#) to see the January 8th edition of the [America’s SBDC Network Connection Newsletter](#). Please note that the America's SBDC Network Connection newsletter has a new look for 2015 and it will now be distributed on as a bi-weekly publication.

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The **WEEKLY CONNECTION** is distributed by the Illinois SBDC and DCEO Office of Entrepreneurship, Innovation & Technology each Monday to members of the DCEO Illinois SBDC Network to provide the service delivery partners with regular updates on small business issues, opportunities and resources. You may send any information to share with the Illinois SBDC Network to Tom.Becker@illinois.gov. Please feel free to forward this update to other interested resource providers and key stakeholders.



Celebrating 30 Years of Small Business Success

